

Roger Brooke Taney to Andrew Jackson, October 15, 1836, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

CHIEF JUSTICE TANEY TO JACKSON.

Private

Baltimore, October 15, 1836.

My Dear sir, I received your letter this morning and sincerely rejoice to find that you propose giving to your countrymen a parting address. I concur entirely in your suggestion that it should be the last act of your political life and not form a part of your annual message. The topics which you propose to introduce in it, ought not to be mixed up with the ordinary and every day business of the Government, which necessarily forms a part of the annual message. Your Farewell address should be exclusively devoted to those great and enduring principles upon which our institutions are founded, and without which the blessings of freedom cannot be preserved. It will be an invaluable legacy to your Countrymen, it will be received with the most affectionate confidence and gratitude, and its influence will be felt in future ages as well as in the present. I repeat that I sincerely rejoice to find that you have thought of it, and trust that you will carry it into execution. Any services that I can render will be given with real pleasure.

I set out tomorrow morning to hold a circuit Court at Dover in Delaware, and shall I presume be absent about a week. But the subject of your address will now be constantly in my mind, and if you determine to deliver it at the close of your political life, it will give me more time to deliberate on it, and to make suggestions as to its form and substance more worthy of your consideration. And as I hope you, will determine to adopt that course

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I propose to prepare my notions on the subject and bring them with [me] when I come to the Supreme Court in the beginning of January. I shall then have frequent opportunities of seeing you and of learning your wishes in all the details of this most interesting matter. If however you prefer having my suggestions at an earlier day have the goodness to let me know. The Circuit Court for Maryland will commence in the beginning of November and will last perhaps two or three weeks. But I shall be out of Court during the whole of December. Yet if necessary I will find time to attend to your wishes during the session of the Circuit Court.

Allow me to congratulate you on the auspicious result of the Pennsylvania Elections. At the present time and under present circumstances the elections of that State were more important to the cause of freedom than they have ever been before or can ever perhaps be again. They furnish a proud evidence of the spirit, the independence, and the purity of the freemen of that State, and give a new assurance that they will never barter their liberties for money nor shrink before the frowns of the moneyed aristocracy. The same spirit will I doubt not be found to prevail in the great majority of the people of the U. States, and congratulating you on the bright prospects of our country which you so largely contributed to produce

I am D'r sir with the Highest respect